

RELEASED IN PART
1.4(B), 1.4(D)

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PTQ3831

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ACTION AF-01

INFO	LOG-00	AID-01	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	OASY-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	EB-01	EUR-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-14	LAB-01
	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	PA-01	PM-00	PRS-01	P-01	SB-00	SCT-00	SP-00
	SR-00	SS-00	STR-01	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00
	PRME-01	DRL-09	G-00	/038W			

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P 311704Z JAN 95
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1738
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 01262

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/C AND EUR/UBI

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PHUM, BE, RW, BY, CG
SUBJECT: BELGIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND SOCIALISTS
ON AFRICA POLICY

REF: 94 BRUSSELS 12672

1. C - AS INDICATED

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SUMMARY

2. (C) THE BELGIAN MFA CONTINUES TO PREPARE FOR THE MUCH-POSTPONED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON CENTRAL AFRICA, NOW SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN MID-FEBRUARY. RECENT PRESS REPORTS HAVE HINTED AT DISSENSION WITHIN THE GOVERNING COALITION OVER THE THRUST OF THE MFA PAPER. WE ANTICIPATE THE DEBATE COULD EXPOSE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (PM DEHAENE'S PARTY) AND THE SOCIALISTS. THE LATTER CONTROL THE MFA AND THE SECRETARIAT FOR COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT. END SUMMARY.

3. (U) A SPATE OF RECENT PRESS ARTICLES PURPORTS TO REVEAL A "SPLIT" IN THE FLEMISH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (CVP) OF PM DEHAENE OVER BELGIUM'S CENTRAL AFRICAN AID POLICY. THE ARTICLES MENTION THAT AN INTERNAL PAPER PREPARED BY CEPESS, THE CVP'S THINK TANK, ADVOCATES THE RESUMPTION OF AID TO ZAIRE, RWANDA, AND BURUNDI FUNNELLED PRIMARILY THROUGH NGO'S. THE CEPESS STUDY ARGUES THAT THE THREE CENTRAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES SHOULD REMAIN THE FOCI OF BELGIAN DEVELOPMENT AID AND THAT SAFETY OF NGO WORKERS AND "COOPERANTS" SHOULD BE ASSURED BY THE PRESENCE OF BELGIAN TROOPS, IF NECESSARY.

4. (U) IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORTING, PM DEHAENE'S SPOKESMAN HAS DENIED THAT THERE IS A SPLIT WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT COALITION OVER AID POLICY TO CENTRAL AFRICA. THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT PM DEHAENE DID NOT AGREE WITH
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SOME OF THE POINTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE CEPESS STUDY.

5. (C) POLOFF SPOKE WITH [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ABOUT THE ALLEGED SPLIT IN CVP RANKS OVER THE
GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT BELGIAN AID POLICY. [REDACTED]

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6. (C) COMMENT. THE MUCH-POSTPONED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON AFRICAN POLICY IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE BY MID-FEBRUARY. THE CVP, AS MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT COALITION, IS SURELY AWARE OF THE GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE MFA'S AFRICA POLICY PAPER. AS REFTTEL REPORTED, THE MFA PAPER ADVOCATES ADOPTING A MORE BALANCED DISTRIBUTION OF AID BY USING A REGIONAL APPROACH RATHER THAN FOCUSING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON RWANDA, BURUNDI, AND ZAIRE. IN ADDITION, THE MFA WOULD LIKE TO SEE A REFORM OF GUIDELINES UNDER WHICH COOPERANTS SERVE AND MORE EXTENSIVE

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COORDINATION BETWEEN THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES INVOLVED IN
AFRICAN COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY.

7. (C) THE LAST TWO POINTS ARE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THE CVP. WITH AN EXTENSIVE NETWORK OF RELIGIOUS (READ MAINLY CATHOLIC) NGO'S, THE CVP SEES ITS PROJECTS IN CENTRAL AFRICA AS FULFILLING SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS NEEDS. BELGIUM'S LAST TWO FONMINS AND THE SECRETARY FOR COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF THE SP

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SUBJECT: BELGIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND SOCIALISTS
ON AFRICA POLICY

(FLEMISH SOCIALISTS). THE SP, WHILE ADMITTING THE
IMPORTANCE OF CATHOLIC NGO'S IN THE AID SCENE, TAKES A DIM
VIEW OF THE INFLUENCE THEY EXERT IN THE FORMULATION OF
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BELGIAN AID POLICY. THE MFA'S POLICY PAPER IS AS MUCH A
REFLECTION OF CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES IN CENTRAL AFRICA AS
AN ATTEMPT TO TIE DEVELOPMENT POLICY TO "OBJECTIVE"
CRITERIA. WITH MUCH MONEY AT STAKE AND SUBSTANTIAL
NUMBERS OF COOPERANTS POSSIBLY AFFECTED BY A MORE
"OBJECTIVE" POLICY, THE DEBATE COULD EXPOSE SOME
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND
SOCIALISTS. END COMMENT

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